

A Red-Letter Day for Revisionism, April 22, 1993

The US Holocaust Memorial Museum: A Challenge

Robert Faurisson

The question of the existence or non-existence of the Nazi gas chambers is one of considerable historical importance.

If the gas chambers existed, they provide evidence that the Germans attempted to physically exterminate the Jews; on the other hand, if they didn't exist, we have no evidence of such an extermination attempt. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, a leading French anti-Revisionist, is under no illusion. To those tempted to give up the controversy over the gas chambers, he has warned that to jettison the gas chambers "is to surrender in open country." (*Nouvel Observateur*, Sept. 21, 1984, p. 80.) One can only agree. The gas chambers are not -- contrary to what Jean-Marie Le Pen once remarked -- a mere footnote ("Point de détail") of Second World War history. Thus, those who contest their existence are subject to judicial sanction in France and some other countries.

Nor could the monumental US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, which was formally dedicated on April 22, 1993, allow itself to ignore the Nazi gas chambers. The question remained: What kind of physical representation of this terrifying weapon would the new Museum provide?

We now know the answer, and it is dismaying: For lack of anything better this opulent museum -- which has cost American taxpayers and donors from the American Jewish community more than \$150 million -- has been reduced to showing us, as its only model of a homicidal gas chamber, a casting of a gas chamber at the former Majdanek camp in Poland: a gas chamber for ... delousing. As I shall explain, even Jean-Claude Pressac, author of a 564-page work published in 1989 in cooperation with the Beate Klarsfeld Foundation of New York, was obliged to acknowledge that this room was merely a delousing chamber.

This is nothing new. As early as 1945 the Americans were portraying four delousing (disinfestation) chambers in the Dachau camp (Germany) as homicidal gas chambers.

Those in charge of the new Holocaust Museum in Washington have resorted to so grave an imposture, I believe, because they are forced to do so: they are not able to offer visitors a physical representation, in any form whatsoever, of one of the chambers, we are told incessantly, the Germans used to murder swarms of victims.

My Challenge in Stockholm and Washington

On March 17, 1992, I threw down the gauntlet to the Jewish organizations of the entire world. On that day, after arriving in Stockholm at the invitation of my friend Ahmed Rami, I issued a challenge of international scope to the Swedish media. It consisted of this nine-word sentence: **"Show me or draw me a Nazi gas chamber!"**

These words were accompanied by two pages of explanation.

According to my information, the Swedish media, eager to answer my challenge, immediately contacted every possible source in order to obtain photographs of Nazi gas chambers. To their consternation, they discovered that no such photographs exist, and that the facilities or rooms currently portrayed to tourists at Auschwitz and elsewhere as homicidal gas chambers have none of the characteristics of such chemical slaughterhouses. Although the Swedish media leveled innumerable personal attacks against me, my challenge was not mentioned in a single newspaper article, or in a single word on radio or television.

Over the months the embarrassment would grow among those who propagate the thesis of the physical extermination of the Jews during the Second World War: hence the frenzied agitation that has gripped Jewish organizations worldwide.

On April 21, 1993, I renewed my challenge in Washington, this time directing it to the officials of the Holocaust Museum that was to be dedicated there the next day, with President Clinton, several heads of state, and Elie Wiesel in attendance. Among the Museum officials I had in mind, I was thinking especially of Michael Berenbaum, its Research Institute Director.

My challenge in Washington can be summed up as follows:

Tomorrow the US Holocaust Memorial Museum will be dedicated in Washington. I challenge the Museum authorities to provide us a physical representation of the magical gas chamber. I have searched for 30 years for such a representation without finding it: neither at Auschwitz, nor in any other concentration camp; not in a museum, or a book; neither in a dictionary nor an encyclopedia; not in a photograph, model or documentary film.

Of course I am acquainted with certain attempts at representation, but all of them are illusory. None withstands examination. In particular, when one understands the extreme dangers of using Zyklon B (a commercial insecticide) or hydrocyanic acid (HCN), one quickly realizes that the sites sometimes portrayed to tourists as homicidal gas chambers could never have served as chemical slaughterhouses without enormous danger for everyone in the area. When one understands the extreme -- and inevitable -- complexity of a gas chamber for the execution of a single man by hydrocyanic acid in an American penitentiary, one sees immediately that the places portrayed as Nazi "gas chambers" - where, day after day, veritable swarms of victims were supposedly killed - lack today (and lacked then) the least bit of the formidable machinery that would have been required.

Apart from the matter of sealing the chambers, one of the most serious problems to solve would have been that of the entering the HCN-saturated chamber after the execution to remove the corpses, themselves saturated with the same poison. Hydrocyanic acid penetrates into the skin, the mucous membranes, and the bodily fluids. The corpse of a man who has just been killed by this powerful poison is itself a dangerous source of poisoning, and cannot be touched with bare hands. In order to enter the HCN-saturated chamber to remove the corpse, special gear is needed, as well as a gas mask with a special filter. Because physical exertion must be kept to a minimum (it accelerates respiration, reducing the filter's effectiveness), it is necessary, before entering the area, to evacuate the gas, and then neutralize it. On this matter, I refer to the documents on gas chambers used in American penitentiaries that I published in 1980. (1)

I warn the officials of the US Holocaust Museum and, in particular, Mr. Berenbaum, that tomorrow, April 22, 1993, they need not offer, as proof of the existence of Nazi gas chambers, a disinfection gas chamber, a shower room, a morgue, or an air-raid shelter. I am even less interested in a section of a wall, a door, a pile of shoes, a bundle of hair, or a heap of eyeglasses. I want a portrayal of an entire Nazi gas chamber, one that gives a precise idea of its technique and operation.

Evasion and Trickery

I knew this challenge could not be answered because, as a matter of fact, for half a century they have been telling us about Nazi gas chambers without ever showing us one. I also fully expected that the Museum would be reduced to playing a trick of some kind. But just what kind of trick?

The answer would come the next day, April 22, the date of the formal dedication. (The Museum opened to the public on April 26.) On the 22nd, I obtained a copy of a book of about 250 pages that presents itself as a sort of catalog of the new Museum. This book is by Michael Berenbaum, and is entitled *The World Must Know: The History of the Holocaust As Told in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* (1993, xvi + 240 pages).

On page 138 are three photographs:

- The first shows a Zyklon B canister and some pellets of Zyklon B, which is described as a "highly poisonous insecticide."
- The second shows "a casting of the door to the gas chamber at Majdanek ... from the outside, SS guards could observe the killing through a small peephole."
- The third photograph shows "the inside of a Majdanek gas chamber.

The blue stain is a chemical remnant of Zyklon B." (2)

The first photograph proves nothing more than that the Germans used the insecticide Zyklon B. (This commercial product was used throughout the world.) The second and the third photos should be familiar to visitors of the former Majdanek camp in Poland. They will recognize the outer door and the interior door, as well as a portion of the inside of the first chamber shown to visitors there as an execution gas chamber, even though this room has all the characteristics of a delousing gas chamber. In this regard, I will not cite here my own research, including my photographs that show the entire room, including the little annex containing a stove to provide the heat, which was essential to circulate the HCN from Zyklon B. (In the second photograph described above, the intake vent for the air heated by the furnace can be seen, at hip height, on the right.) Nor shall I cite here the expert report of American gas chamber specialist Fred Leuchter, which concludes definitively that this room was a delousing gas chamber where, not human beings but, at most, typhus-bearing lice were killed.

[Photograph captioned, "Dr. Robert Faurisson at the April 21 IHR meeting in suburban Washington, DC, where he issued his challenge to the officials of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum."]

J.-C. Pressac's Admission

I shall content myself here by referring to Jean-Claude Pressac, protege of the Beate Klarsfeld Foundation and author of the 1989 anti-Revisionist work *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers* (a misleading title, by the way). Here, then, is Pressac's opinion of the room that Berenbaum dares to portray as a homicidal gas chamber:

The red-ochre bricks stained with dark blue were for him [Bernard Jouanneau, an attorney who opposed Faurisson in a 1982 court case in Paris] material and visible proof of the existence of homicidal gas chambers. The problem, for there is one, is that the gas chamber presented has all the characteristics of a DELOUSING [sic] installation. I am not saying that it was never used to kill people, for that is possible [here, Pressac is wrong. - R.F. (3)] but the traces of Prussian blue are an absolutely certain indication of use for delousing purposes. (p. 555.)

Pressac goes on to note that the presence of a peep-hole is no proof of a homicidal gas chamber because a delousing gas chamber may be furnished with such a peep-hole. He concludes:

I am sorry to say, and I am not the only one in the West, that the Majdanek homicidal and/or delousing gas chambers are still waiting for a true historian, which is mildly upsetting in view of the fact that the camp fell into the hands of the Russians intact in

On page 557 he presents a photograph of the exterior of the gas chamber in question and of another gas chamber located in the same building. According to the caption, this is a photograph ... showing one of the disinfestation gas chambers thought to be a homicidal gas chamber. Between the two doors with their inspection peepholes, the darker bricks are of Prussian blue colour, a sign of prolonged use of "Blausäure/blue acid," in other words hydrocyanic or prussic acid sold as a delousing agent under the name of "Zyklon B."

It should be noted that these gas chambers were in the *Bad und Desinfektion* ("Bath and Disinfection") building, located right at the entrance to the camp, and in plain view.

It is understandable that in his "Bibliographical Note" (pp. 224-232) Berenbaum makes no mention of Pressac's 564-page book.

A New Advance for Revisionism

In 1978 President Jimmy Carter established a commission charged with creating a federal government Holocaust memorial museum. He chose as its chairman Elie Wiesel, thereby providing Arthur Butz with the inspiration for a comment both accurate and sarcastic: A historian was needed, but a histrion was chosen.

The choice of Berenbaum as the Museum scholarly" authority is of the same nature. Berenbaum is an adjunct professor of theology at Georgetown University. Where a historian was required, a theologian was chosen - which is appropriate because, for some years now, in place of the history of the "Holocaust," Jewish organizations have substituted the **religion** of the "Holocaust."

The central pillar of this religion, as I have often said, is "the magical gas chamber that, like a mirage, is the image of nothing real."

To portray this "central pillar," Museum officials selected a delousing gas chamber falsely labeled as a homicidal gas chamber. Although it was designed and built by the Germans as a facility for protecting the health of Jewish and non-Jewish prisoners, it is presented to us as an instrument for the torture and murder of these inmates. This portrayal epitomizes the deceit and the effrontery of the zealots of the "Holocaust" religion.

The time has come for a little more intellectual honesty and sanity regarding the story of the Jewish people's real misfortunes during the Second World War. Visitors to the new Holocaust Museum in Washington -- particularly American taxpayers, without whom it would not exist -- have a right to demand an accounting from Mr. Berenbaum and his friends. A recent article in the *Los Angeles Times* was headlined "Poll Finds 1 Out of 3 Americans Open to Doubt There Was a Holocaust." (April 20, 1993) The doubts will increase.

A few days after the Museum's formal dedication, Berenbaum revealed to a newspaper:

You're surrounded by death [in the Museum]. It's like working in an emergency room or a mortuary.... I've ended up on an analyst's couch. (*The Washington Post* , April 26, 1993, p. B6.)

It is not out of the question that Berenbaum will return to the analyst's couch when he grasps the grave consequences of his deception. April, 22, 1993, was supposed to be a date for the consecration of the "Holocaust" religion on American soil. In reality, this date will go down in history as marking an outstanding victory for revisionist historians.

[Photograph captioned, "A few of the two hundred or so persons who rallied in Washington, DC, on April 22 to express opposition to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum."]

To conclude, I would like to pay tribute here to those revisionists who have contributed to the victory on this specific point:

- First, to Ahmed Rami, exiled in Stockholm, who allowed me to publicly launch the "Stockholm Challenge" of March 17, 1992;
- Next, to the Institute for Historical Review in southern California, which, since 1979, has, more than any institution in the world, made possible the publication of books, essays and articles on the "Holocaust" of a scholarly and often unrewarding nature, and this in spite of repression, persecution and violence; this Institute has organized eleven conferences under sometimes difficult and even dramatic conditions, and, as a matter of fact, arranged the meeting in suburban Washington, DC, on April 21 where I was able to renew my Stockholm Challenge, this time to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum; (4)
- Finally, to Ernst Zündel of Toronto, without whom "Holocaust" revisionism would probably still be struggling in obscurity.

My thoughts are also of the French revisionists who have expended so much effort, among them one person in particular, whom I cannot mention without putting in danger, who could be called the mainspring of the revisionist movement in France.

Notes

1. Serge Thion, *Vérité historique ou vérité politique?* (Paris: 1980), pp. 301-309.

2. On pages 140-144 of Berenbaum's new book, one finds naive plaster figurines that supposedly represent, in sequence, victims in the changing room, in the gas chamber, and in the crematory room of an Auschwitz-Birkenau crematory. While historical museums (such as military and war museums) routinely strive to illustrate what really happened using models that are as accurate and as graphic as possible, these figurines in Berenbaum's book are presented in a kind of ethereal setting. The captions are sullied by imprecision, errors, and absurdities, and they testify to an urgent need to revise downward the number of alleged victims of each gassing, and the number of daily cremations. Berenbaum makes discreet allusion to a model that the Polish Communists built after the war, and which is still

exhibited at the Auschwitz State Museum (Block 4, second floor). I understand that a replica of this model may be displayed at the Holocaust Museum in Washington. If so, why hasn't Berenbaum included it in his book? Might he have learned that I often use this model to illustrate the physical impossibilities of the gassing operations it is supposed to replicate? See, in particular, my video "Le Problème des chambres à gaz" (1982), as well as my commentary, "Auschwitz en images," given at the end of the French edition of Wilhelm Stäglich's book, *Le Mythe d'Auschwitz* (La Vieille Taupe, 1986, pp. 492, 507). Even J.-C. Pressac is skeptical of this model. (*Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, pp. 377-378). Symptomatically, though, he does not provide one of his own.

3. A Zyklon B delousing gas chamber could not have been used as a homicidal gas chamber. The first can be operated relatively easily, while the second is necessarily very complicated. The conceptual difference between the two lies in the relative ease of ridding the fabric and clothes of HCN gas after the delousing, as opposed to the extreme difficulty of removing gas from the skin, mucous membranes, and bodily fluids of a corpse. In the first case, the HCN gas is removed by blowing in a large amount of hot air, which causes most of it to evaporate. Then the fabric and the clothes are beaten for some time outdoors to discharge the remaining gas. In the second case, heating or beating the corpses would not be possible. An authentic homicidal gas chamber, of the kind used in the United States to execute convicted criminals, is extremely complicated. To execute even a **single person** is so complicated that one can scarcely imagine the appalling sophistication the Nazi gas chambers would have required to execute not just one victim, but hundreds or even thousands at a time. Such gas chambers would have become veritable baths of poison, impossible to drain. Nobody, even wearing a gas mask, could have ever survived entering such oceans of hydrocyanic acid and making the physical effort of removing the corpses, and clean up for the next batch.

4. At that meeting, I also made two additional challenges:

First: give me the name of the person whom you consider to be the best eyewitness of gassings.

Second: make public the documents you continue to keep secret, particularly the papers of Dr. Mengele. (There are about 30 pounds of Mengele papers, including his memoir *Fiat Lux* - "Let There Be Light" - which suggests that he describes there the reality of Auschwitz.)

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